

Speaker 1: 00:00 Hey everybody, it's amber Karnes, founder of body positive yoga. You can find me online at body-positive Yoga.com, where I've got a blog with a ton of free resources, the body positive clubhouse, which is my monthly subscription site where you can get yoga classes, self care, and self acceptance materials and lots more inside a private supportive community of like-minded folks. Just like you today, we're speaking with Kara Lowentheil. So Kara is a master certified life coach and the creator of unfuck your brain, which we're going to talk about a lot today. And, um, I met Kara, she has been to two of my yoga retreats now, and Kara's a big inspiration to me as a feminist, a business owning bad-ass. And um, so Kara is a life coach, but I'm in case you're wondering, it doesn't mean she is one of the womb, a divine feminine goddess, a medicine woman. You get the idea. I'm a Karma is, uh, one of the smartest people I know. She has a ba from Yale and a jd from Harvard law. And uh, she has been a women's rights lawyer and I'm now with her coaching. Um, she uses cognitive psychology based techniques and feminist theory. So, Kara, welcome to the podcast.

Speaker 2: 01:19 Thank you. I'm excited to be here.

Speaker 1: 01:21 So, um, I sort of just did a half ass introduction of you, but I would love for you to share your story and how, uh, how you came to be a coach and specifically how unfuck your brain came to be. So that's what your big project is right now. So tell us.

Speaker 2: 01:38 Yeah, well, you know, I just sat down and said to myself like, what would make my Jewish parents cry the most? I became a life coach now. Um, so I was a lawyer and I, I've always worked in women's rights and feminist activism in high school and you know, in high school I authored a lot of really obnoxious op eds for the school newspaper and I did work in college and then I want to be in the reproductive rights movement. So then I sort of had to decide what to do next. And I would say the reproductive rights movement was like being in a Jewish family. It was like you can be a doctor or a lawyer. Those were the two things to do. That is definitely not gonna be a doctor. So I went to law school kind of for that reason. Law School was, you know, horrible it is for most people.

Speaker 2: 02:20 Um, and I sort of already had some hints that this was not really the right path for me, but I didn't even really question it because I was just so sunk into the idea that there were only a couple of acceptable things to do with your life. So I sort of white knuckle through in, you know, was anxious all the time, procrastinated, constantly hated the whole experience. And then I want it to be a reproductive rights litigator. That was my

big dream job. And so I had to clerk for a judge for two years as sort of part of the qualifications for that. And then I got this fellowship where I was doing state and federal governments or you know, for reproductive rights issues. And that was like the thing I've been working for and I did not really feel any better and that was sort of my first inkling of a sign that perhaps the solution to all of my anxiety and insecurity and fear was not going to be an external job, which you think I would've figured out given that I went to Yale and Harvard and have not felt any better about myself, but it had still somehow not totally sunk in.

Speaker 2: 03:22 So I was like a sort of having doubts, but I was definitely not even close to ready to giving up on my legal career. And so I decided to become an academic, uh, to become a law professor because my theory was like, at least it wouldn't be as I foolishly thought there was so much conflict as in litigation. Of course, what I learned is all academia is arguing with other people about ideas that turned out to not be true. Um, and also that it'll be more flexible. I would have the summers off, which also turned out to not be true. You just write all summer where your academics. So I had a very rosy in view, um, so I went into academia, um, and it just sort of continue this pattern where I was like achieving at a very high level. I had the fellowship at Yale and then I had a fellowship at Columbia that I was recruited to and then I ran a think tank at Columbia law school.

Speaker 2: 04:07 Um, and you know, all along I was doing well enough to keep getting these brass rings and advancing down the path. But I never actually felt all that invested in it. I obviously care about women in their reproductive rights, but I just never really cared about the law. I can never remember anything about the law. Like I just was not, you know, emotionally the intellect has the libido. Like anything else. I think so. And so during that time I have, I've always been interested in psychology and self-help and the human mind. But I just, in my brain at that time, it was like, well, the only way to do that would be to go become a psychologist. I'd have to go get a phd. That would be another seven years of school, so I didn't want to do that, but I was studying stuff on my own and in and around maybe [inaudible] [inaudible], so probably around 2015 maybe.

Speaker 2: 04:57 Um, or 14 somewhere a few years ago I sort of stumbled on my teacher, my current teacher, um, and her work just clicked for me in a way that we're heading out before, um, some of which is the way that she explains it, delivers things and some of which is just like when you're ready, you're ready. So I started to kind of apply her work to my own life and it changed a lot in my emotional life. I actually was focusing on my personal life,

not as much my work life at the time, but it really transformed my romantic relationship and dating life, my relationship with my family, which had been very stressful for me. Um, and I just sort of started to feel more and more compelled by the idea of teaching it to other people. And then, um, I woke up one morning and I just thought like, OK, that's it.

Speaker 2: 05:42 I'm not going to be a law professor, I'm going to be locked, I'm going to be life coach. This is what I'm gonna do. I'm going to coach lawyers, which is who I started out coaching. And so I think it had been percolating subconsciously, but it had just like come to the conscious brain. Um, and um, usually I was catching up with an old friend maybe a few months later and I was like, oh my God is big news. I think become a life coach. Like who would have ever thought. She was like, you've been saying that for years. I was like, no, this is what are you talking about? This is the whole idea. And she was like, you've been saying for years I'm going to quit the law to move to Costa Rica and can a life coach. I was, it's like that idea had been back there.

Speaker 2: 06:14 But, and I had been seeing that without even being conscious of it as like a real desire. So that was kind of fascinating. I was like, oh, I guess part of me knew this like a decade ago, but it took me a while to catch up and I think that I'm fucking in my brain. I had to do for that transition was like I had to let go of all my thoughts about like what were acceptable careers is, what other people would think, all the sunk cost of my legal career that was like hundreds of thousands of dollars and years of my life. Um, what the prestige was. I mean, you know, people have very different reactions when you tell them you're a life coach versus a law professor and no one in my family would have done something like that. They're all doctors and lawyers. So that was like the big piece of work for me in that transition.

Speaker 2: 07:00 I started out coaching lawyers, but it just, it wasn't a step in my evolution, but I was still sort of trying to play it safe. It was like, oh, this sounds legitimate. You know, it's like weird to not to leave law to become a life coach, but if you're coaching lawyers and that kind of makes sense. So I was still kind of in that pattern of thinking somewhat and it was great and I learned a ton and I coached a lot of women that I love to death and I think, you know, Korean, a lot of change for them. But over time it sort of became clear to me that like, that was not my life mission to help lawyers with work stress. I mean I still do that as part of this bigger thing, but um, that I was just sort of replicating the same thing.

Speaker 2: 07:40 And then a few months ago only really I, I, um, had a retreat with a business coach and she was like, well, it's coaching lawyers like you're, are you gonna be doing that in five years? And I was like, no, I think this is like maybe two years. And then I'll expand. And she was just like, well why don't we just do that now? Like, why are you going to keep doing this thing that you already don't really want to do so much? Um, and so that's when I came up with on fuck your brain, which is a feminist blueprint for creating confidence. So it takes all the work I had already been doing in addition to lawyers and work stress. I had been coding, coaching a lot of women on dating. I'd had like two separate little businesses. Um, but what I realized was that the underlying theme was helping high achieving feminist women who struggle with anxiety and insecurity, that those two things were kind of destroying their lives from the inside and either holding them back or if they were accomplishing things, kind of robbing them of the enjoyment of those accomplishments. That's what I work on now.

Speaker 1: 08:35 Well, I appreciate hearing your story because, you know, it does. I think it kind of illustrates a couple of things, which is, you know, we, we don't always, um, hit on are like, life's purpose and passion the first time around. And I think that there's a stigma with that. Like, you're always supposed to know what you're going to when you grow up and you should be working on the next great thing all the time and I don't think that's actually how it happens most of the time, like we're all figuring life out. So I appreciate you sharing that and I think I'm, I'm such a big fan of the work you're doing, especially with the way that you coach people to manage their thoughts and feelings and we're going to get into that a little bit more, but I want to kick it off talking about, um, something that I see a lot.

Speaker 1: 09:22 So I'm, I'm a yoga person, you know, in addition to the sort of coaching that I do around like body image and stuff like that. So I see a lot of stuff in the yoga world about, you know, affirmations and positive thinking and like if you just raise your vibration then the universe will bring you everything on your Christmas list. That kind of bullshit. And so I wonder if you could talk a little bit about how, you know, there is something to affirmations and positive thinking, but how does that actually, you know, kind of work and what's a more reasoned and grounded perspective on it for, for feminist women that want to bring more positive things into their lives?

Speaker 2: 10:02 Yeah, totally. So the reason that positive thinking affirmations don't work is that you don't believe them. So the theory behind them is that if you just keep saying them to yourself, you will

eventually believe them. And sometimes that's true, although it normally takes a really long time and I don't think it works that well for Super Analytical, anxious people who then start judging that whole process themselves too. So, um, I do not. That is not what I teach in. In fact, I think it can be kind of harmful because you're telling people that they should feel and believe this thing that's so far away for them. So it doesn't seem realistic. Then they try and it doesn't work immediately and then they beat themselves up about that and then they give up.

- Speaker 1: 10:40 Yeah. I mean, I see this all the time with their sort of like body positivity stuff like love your body. Oh my God, don't you live it yet, don't you love yourself, aren't you? So beautiful? And everybody's like, that's bullshit a mile away. So
- Speaker 2: 10:52 yeah, totally. So what I really teach, um, my, the principles that I teach are really based in the neuroscience about cognitive behavior, cognition and behavior similar to cognitive behavioral therapy. Um, and so I really focus on what I call baby steps or a neutral thoughts. These are thoughts that are between where you are now and where you want to go. So for instance, when I was doing body image coaching on myself, I did not go from my stomach is disgusting, to my stomach is beautiful. I didn't believe that, right? So instead what I practice were thoughts like, that's the human stomach. That is my stomach, right? Those are neutral thoughts. They don't feel amazing, but they don't feel as terrible as my stomach is disgusting. You know, the way the brain works, it basically has to be thinking something. So if you give it a thought to think that feels better than what you're thinking before, it kind of doesn't matter that you might also still believe the old thought if you just keep practicing that new thought, you'll keep creating a little bit of relief. So it's like, it's almost like you have to freeze frame when I think this thought I this way, OK then I'm just going to keep thinking this thought I will continue to feel neutral more often. And then you can work your way up to the positive.
- Speaker 1: 12:00 Right? And I think the key that you're saying is like you have to believe the thought. So that's why the positive affirmation, this sort of aspirational thought doesn't work for us most of the time because we don't believe it.
- Speaker 2: 12:12 Yeah. And the way you tell if you believe the thought is you say to yourself and then you check in with your body and see how it feels. So if when you think my stomach is disgusting, you feel ashamed or just bad, you may not even have the emotional vocabulary to know what the feeling is. You might just feel bad and then you think I'd have a human stomach. Do you notice

that you feel a little better if, so, you believe the thought. And that's a good thought to practice.

- Speaker 1: 12:35 Um, so this sort of, um, can dovetail into something else that I've seen you talk about a lot which is don't get hit by the feelings bus, which I think is such a great, um, like analogy or um, I don't know if that's the right word anyway, sort of picture of what happens, which is like we, uh, we get ambushed by thoughts and feelings that we don't like and you know, I'd like for you to talk about how do we prevent that or like how do we avoid getting hit by the feelings bus?
- Speaker 2: 13:05 Yeah. The image of being hit by this funny I'm. The way I actually normally talk about it is that most of us act like our feelings are just a bus that goes by that we have no control over. So like we go into the day being like, well, I hope feeling confident bus comes by. Like, I hope I don't end up boarding the feeling terrible about myself bus right as though it's like someone else is sending those emotions along and we've no control over them. Um, and so for most people to huge step, just to think about the idea that you could have some say in how you feel, you could decide how you want to feel that feelings don't just happen to you. Right? So you don't just get hit by the feelings, but you actually have a thought that produces the feeling you have. All of your feelings are produced by thoughts. That's the sort of core philosophy and everything I teach in everything I coach. Um, so if your thoughts are what produce your feelings and you can learn how to change your thoughts than you can drive the bus ride or you can make whatever budget you want appear as opposed to just going through your day being like, I hope I don't feel bad today. I hope I feel something good. I hope that that comes by and acting as though you have no control over.
- Speaker 1: 14:15 Yeah. So can you give a quick example of that? Um, I heard you talk on your podcast about like applying this concept to like being around your family at the holidays, that kind of thing. But do you have another favorite example?
- Speaker 2: 14:27 Yeah, I mean I've worked for anything. Like if you go into work and you find work really stressful, so you have a boss that you find really stressful, you can go into work being like, I just hope I don't get upset again today. Probably you're going to or you can do the work to figure out ahead of time what you want to think and feel when you're in that situation. When you're in the situation, it's hard to change your thoughts and feelings, especially when you're just, you just doing this work. Like now I can do it automatically but I couldn't at the beginning. So pre

planning how you want to think and feel is huge because when you're not in it you have a lot more kind of mental energy and awareness to be able to think about it ahead of time. So if you know that thinking, the thought I'm good at my job, no matter what else other people do, helps you feel confident, you can plan ahead of time to think that thought. Right? So you go through the prosecute, brainstorm to figure out what that thought is. It feels good and then you commit to practicing it, but go ahead of time and when you're at the office. So then you know, the confidence, buses drive the confidence bus there to continue the metaphor, right? You don't just get on the first bus that comes by and be like, nope, this is the confidence one and not the terrible feeling one.

- Speaker 1: 15:34 And I think the really powerful thing about this concept is that like most of us, you know, when we find ourselves in a situation that's like upsetting to us, especially if it's like a relationship thing, you know, whether it's our boss or our partner or family or whatever, you know, the stuff that's, that we get into trouble over isn't happening to us for the first time. It's like your sister's making a comment on your life choices for the 30th time. You know, this month or like your father mentioned your weight or whatever it is, like that one thing always upsets you. So the cool thing is that like we can actually predict what's going to upset us and then like you said, plan out what you want to think ahead of time. Like it's such a game changer.
- Speaker 2: 16:16 Yeah. People are always like, I hope my father isn't exactly the person who has always been today. Like, no, he probably is going to be. I hope my, I hope my sister doesn't make a comment about my romantic choice as well. Has she done it every other time? You found out pretty hundred percent chance she's going to do it again. So then you can be prepared and rather than spending all this energy like I hope she doesn't. And then getting really mad and then spending all this energy being mad about it afterwards, like you knew that was going to happen.
- Speaker 1: 16:43 Awesome. Um, so I wanna shift gears just a little bit. Um, so we've met because of a, you came to the very first yoga retreat that I ever threw. Is that true? That was my first one and that actually like, it's funny thinking back now, I'm just like, oh, I hope everyone had a good time so I know what the hell I was doing. But anyway, it was great. I was totally into it now. And the thing that really um, has impressed me about you amongst many other things is how good you are at practicing self care and just like doing and asking for what you need. So the, my example of this is like the last yoga retreat you came to, I think

you did yoga with us like one time. Um, and I think twice, maybe twice. Lower. That's right. Yeah, you did twice.

Speaker 1: 17:28 OK. So, but a lot of the time you know, you, you opted to do what you needed at that retreat which was to rest or whatever. And so I think a lot of people would, you know, maybe what they would need would be rest or solitude, but they would feel obligated to, you know, come to the stuff because they didn't want to, like hurt the feelings or they, you know, I shouldn't do it because I paid for it or like whatever our brain does this mental gymnastics. But um, so how do you do that? How is it, um, how is, ah, how do you find yourself being able to kind of ask for what you need and go for it without feeling guilty or shameful or whatever. All these stupid messages are we get about self care.

Speaker 2: 18:11 Yeah, that's a huge question which may be more than I can totally answer on the podcast. But I will say that I'm one of the, one of the things that your example illustrates is actually kind of a perfect counterpoint to. We were just talking about like other people are the way they are. You already know that, right? So just like accommodate that. I just learned that that's gonna happen and decide how you want to get feel about it. And for me, especially with this particular retreat, it was partly a similar process. A lot of us do this thing where we're like, oh well, you know, I know that I usually hate getting up in the morning, but by the time we get to the yoga retreat, I'm going to be a totally different person who loves doing that. Whereas I sign up for the yoga retreat being like, I don't get up at 7:00 AM or I have to get up at like six and do yoga at seven.

Speaker 2: 18:52 I was like, I don't do that. I'm not going to pretend that I'm going to do that. And so the question, so I like was much more kind of to me realistic being like, OK, this is how much it costs. This is what I'll get out of. This is what I'm gonna do is what I'm not going to do. Do I want to do it? As opposed to having these expectations on myself that I should do everything that I should become this totally different person who likes to get up at 6:00 AM on vacation. I don't even get up at 6:00 AM for work. This is why I work, why I work for myself, because my natural body clock is like 10:00 AM to 2:00 AM, so I can, that's fine. I work much later than most people do, but I don't start as early. So you know, I do teach that you can change almost anything about yourself if you want to, but I think part of that like self care, people pleasing thing you're getting at is that most of us expend effort trying to, um, do what sort of make change ourselves in ways we think other people would want us to kind of.

- Speaker 2: 19:46 And I expend effort only on changing the things that I want to change. So I do think that could become a person who gets up at 6:00 AM for yoga. I just have no interest in doing that. Like it seems like a lot of work and I have other things I want to spend that energy on. So I do. I think that like on a deeper level, one of the most transformational things I teach, especially for women, is that you're always going to be spending your energy doing something, but there is no right or wrong and you get to choose which things like there's going to be work to do, but you get to choose which work you want to do and for women that is especially or other marginalized groups, that's really radical because we're constantly being told what we should be like and having this kind of moralistic veil over our choices that other people have put on us.
- Speaker 2: 20:27 So there are a lot of people in the world. You think it's more morally virtuous to get up at 6:00 AM, to do yoga, especially if you paid for it and I just don't think that. I just don't think that that thought as anything to my life and just makes me feel terrible. Whereas the thought, I don't have to get up at 6:00 AM if I don't want to and I'll do yoga twice, which will be great. It's still more than times than I do yoga in a normal week and relaxed and I think I read like three novels and there was a Hammock I spent like twenty six hours in the hammock and it was great. Um, but I do think that that's the key to that self care thing, right? I mean that term means a lot of different things to different people. But to me that your example is really about people pleasing. Yeah. Please go ahead.
- Speaker 1: 21:08 No, I was going to say yeah. And, and also just the, all the, um, sort of internalized messages that we've received, you know, especially as women about what our role is in society and you know, the sort of traditional gender roles of like a traditionally the burden of raising children and therefore our communities is placed on women. So we're encouraged to like put everyone's needs ahead of our own, which I'm like to the detriment of, you know, our own well being and, and, uh, individual autonomy, which is why like I think it's so crucial as feminists that we do away with that idea and, and understand that like we are, you know, equally we have equal rights to our needs as our partners, as our children, as our, you know, our activism work as whatever. Um, so
- Speaker 2: 22:00 yeah, well I also think like the one of the biggest freedoms and recognizing that your thoughts are what causes your feelings is if that's true for everyone else. So you don't, you stop taking responsibility for other people's thoughts and feelings. Right. So for me, I'm like, if amber is upset that I didn't get up to do yoga,

then amber hasn't thought that's like really not really not my problem and I can't control it to me. Right. Like whether like some people would be upset by that, some people wouldn't. What's in common? What's the difference? Their own thoughts. My behavior is the same, so I'm not the one causing the reaction.

Speaker 1: 22:34 Yeah. And there's so much freedom and just realizing that like you can't actually control anyone else. I mean it, you know, it once we like let go of that illusion that if we act a certain way then maybe they'll act that certain way. Like, no, they're just, I think on one of your podcasts you said like bombs just going to be bob and like that's the truth. Like we can't control what others do.

Speaker 2: 22:56 Yeah, we don't need to. The whole reason you want to manage someone else is so that you can feel differently. So would just coaching a client today who was like, like my boyfriend keeps like baking deserts and bring them over and then I get so mad because then I can't eat the way I want or whatever. Right. And obviously I don't practice, I don't teach diet at all, but you know, if you don't want to eat a thing, you know, so now it's like, OK, so what you want him to do is she was like, I need to teach them about how to change his thinking that he won't bring over the desert was what I was like or, or give you a radical idea. You change your thought about who's in charge of whether you eat Tiramisu. That's, and again, obviously I'm body positive coach. Nothing wrong with getting Tiramisu. Right? But it's like we're trying to like manage other people like Tiramisu exist in the world, whether it's in your apartment or not. If you want it, eat it, eat it if you don't. But like trying to manage your boyfriend's whole, you know, relaxing habit of cooking and way of showing love by bringing you food in order so that you don't eat it makes no sense at all. Yeah, for sure.

Speaker 1: 23:55 Um, so, uh, I want to, you know, we talk a little bit about like people pleasing, um, which brings me around to something you talk about, which I really like, which is the influx of patriarchy, one of which is people pleasing. So will you tell us what, what the 4 mindfucks of Patriarchy are, and then pick one that we're going to talk about, which I think, well, I'll just let you rattle through them and then, and then we'll cover one.

Speaker 2: 24:21 OK. Yeah. So the four mindfucks of patriarchy are, um, I'll give you like a one sentence about what each is... perfectionism, which is the idea that you constantly need to be improving yourself in that if you could just get things right or perfect, you'd be happy. People pleasing, which is when you care more about

what other people think and feel and what you think and feel. It's you prioritize trying to manage other people's thoughts and feelings over your actual ability to manage your own, um, validation seeking, which is when you depend on external sources for your own validation or to feel good about yourself, you're on confidence. And then imposter syndrome, which is when you feel like a fraud, you feel like, um, you're not qualified or you're not talented enough or you're not deserving and that people are going to figure it out at any moment. And it's usually associated with, um, high achieving women in the workplace. But actually I think it happens in all areas of our lives. Some people have that in their romantic relationships. Just this idea that like you've people somehow this far, but they're going to figure out that you're not worthy.

Speaker 1: 25:17

Yeah, I mean I can identify with like each and every one of those that I've struggled with those, you know, sometimes more than others. But definitely like, I think um, you know, one thing that it felt like a lot of relief to hear them kind of outline like the way that you sorted this makes a lot of sense to me. And also then the, the, that because I, you know, personally have dealt with, you know, the same kind of anxiety and stuff that you have described. Like it doesn't mean I'm a weak person because I'm a people pleaser. Like, this is literally how society has set up to have us kind of in check all the time. Your brain has been trained to think this way. Yeah. So I'd love to talk about the um, validation seeking one because I get a lot of questions from people, you know, when we talk about making peace with our bodies and radical self acceptance that like, OK, so if I'm not going to take my, uh, you know, notions of beauty and worth from society, from, you know, beauty standards that are defined by Patriarchy and white supremacy. Uh, well, OK. So I take away all the external validation. Where am I supposed to get this? Like self love or self acceptance from like where does that come from?

Speaker 2: 26:33

It comes from your thoughts. It either way. All right? So there isn't really anything external only validates you. So in so far as you think a thought about it, that then produces a feeling of confidence and that doesn't usually last. So if you look at, um, you know, a thin white model and you think, oh, I look like her. So I feel good. That's still your thought about it, that made you feel good. It's not her existence or what she looks like and it's not your existence or what you look like. You still had a thought about what you look like that made you feel good. That makes sense. So what you do is you change your thoughts, right? I mean there are other things you can do, like as you know, I'm sure you've probably may have shared this, people before are

studies suggesting that if you change, um, your sort of visual diet, new increase body and other forms of diversity in the images you consume, that actually will, it does rewire your brain to see, um, to have a different kind of unconscious norm.

Speaker 2: 27:31 So that has definitely worked in. It's awesome. I mean now when I look at normal straight size models, I'm like, oh my God, why do they look like that? Which is not just finishing, but it's just an indication that like, my default average has changed, right? To a larger size because I, because I'm a larger person, so I consciously decided that was the size I was going to try to like change my default to. Um, so there is some of that, um, you can do some of it with sort of visual retraining, but in terms of sort of loving yourself and having a kind of proactive desiring and feeling of beauty about yourself, it's changing your thoughts so you can't change the external standard, but you don't have to because your only problem is that you're constantly thinking I'm not beautiful because I don't match that standard.

Speaker 2: 28:16 Right, right. And so changing your standards of beauty isn't a mystical practice. It's actually a practice of changing the liberal thoughts in your head and it's not just one or two, you're going to have to change a bunch of them. It's gonna take a long time. Um, but it absolutely can be done. In fact, you know, when I first started this work, I was much smaller than I am now because I had been dieting for my whole life, um, and eating disordered and I did not feel confident at all. And now I'm way bigger because I no longer diet and I'm not eating disordered and I feel so much more confident and it's not just internal my sex, my dating life, or way better because I'm just putting out a completely different energy. So even though, you know, there is fat bias out there and probably a smaller number of people are attracted to women or at least able to admit it and date them, my, my life is better because of the confidence.

Speaker 2: 29:08 Makes such a huge difference. Um, yeah. So it's retraining your brain. I did one of my favorites for people who are really deep in it. This is what I did. I spent an entire summer. I live in Manhattan, which is like the, you know, world capital of conventionally beautiful people. Like every time you walk around you're like, oh, there's a supermodel great. Literally a supermodel. Clearly there's a building around the corner from you that's called the model building because that's where all the models, you know, and a lot of people have a ton of um, income and don't work and spend it on like, you know, achieving an unnatural state. So there's like, that's all around. And what I realized when I started doing this work was that the reason I felt

so bad when I saw those women is that I was telling myself that their lives were better.

Speaker 2: 29:52 They were happier because of how they looked. Right. That's what you want to look different. You only ever want anything to be different because you think you'll be happier that way. Yeah. Honestly, fundamental things. So I spent an entire summer going on and on and every time I saw a conventionally pretty woman, I would say to myself, I'll be suffering such a, like New York Jewish way of doing positive affirmations. That's a perfect example. I was not ready yet to go to like, I'm going to have a wonderful life despite my size because I didn't believe that yet. I was just starting the process, but I did believe and I could keep constantly remind myself to rewire my brain that body size did not correlate to actual happiness and that that's the thing I was after.

Speaker 1: 30:33 Yeah, definitely. And I think, you know, one big step in that is realizing that what you promise you're after is not like a thin body so you can look good and shorts or whatever. And that is this whole other life that we think we're going to achieve once we achieve a certain body size because that's part of what sold to us, right? Like with advertising, it's never like advertising the product. It's advertising what is the, you know, the lifestyle that this product is going to promise to you. And especially with dieting. Um, and so like I think there's this um, uh, sort of like rhetoric that gets passed around and it's a culture that's like inside every fat girl is a thin girl waiting to escape and like it's such bullshit because like, usually the promise of that thin girl is not just like the size of the body.

Speaker 1: 31:26 It's like, who will you be? You know, like you'll be an expensive clothes and you'll have a man chasing after you and you'll have a successful career and you'll be as completely different person that wants to get up at six in the morning to practice together. Like really, like all of those things are attainable if you want them to be. And if you, you know, you can take steps toward achieving those things. They, none of them have to do with body size. And so, um, I think it's so important to realize that like, what's behind that, you know, desire to receive whatever that external validation is like.

Speaker 2: 32:03 Yeah. And also you only want those things because you think you will feel happy, right? You just think you will have a thought that makes you feel happy. You don't know that. You think happiness just arrives. But really what's happening is that like the reason people feel happier if they temporarily was, wait, is that they're now thinking, I look good. I deserve happiness.

Because your thoughts changed about it. Your body didn't change and everybody knows somebody who's conventionally beautiful. His life is a mess.

Speaker 1: 32:30 Oh yeah, definitely. And I know people are plenty of people who have lost a lot of weight, um, most of them very temporarily who still feel like shit about themselves, they become [inaudible]. And so, you know, I think that just the realization of what you're saying that like I'm having good feelings is having thoughts that you like and having bad feelings if you don't like, is really just a profound realization because it means we can control all that stuff. It just takes a little bit of unlearning and relearning.

Speaker 2: 33:02 It really doesn't matter. It doesn't matter what size you are. I mean just really, you don't even think about it because it's just not. Yeah, I mean it took in a deep belief. So most of my beliefs I've been able to change real quickly. That one didn't take at least that whole summer because that's how deeply conditioned to belief is. But every time I'd be like, I would start to have that like jealous feeling an oci with a handsome man. I was like, why do I want the handsome man? Because I think that I would be happy. What makes me happy? Thoughts are what makes me happy. If I think these thoughts, I will be happy if I don't, I won't. It does not matter what I look like or anything else in my life. Hmm.

Speaker 1: 33:38 It's good stuff. All right. So, um, I want you to tell us like where we can find you online and what you're up to and specifically about, um, unfuck your brain. I know the program just started, but I know you've got some resources for people and I'm sure you'll run it again at some point. So, uh, tell us what you're up to.

Speaker 2: 33:57 Yeah. Um, so you can find me at [www dot unfuck your brain](http://www.dotunfuckyourbrain.com), but very important without the EU. So I call it the polite way. Unf C, k, your brains out, somebody else owns the domain with you and it forwards to some web page called the intimacy doctor. That is definitely not. Um, I gotta buy that website from her au , N, m, c, k, your brain. So you can find me there. I also have a podcast where I teach all of the kind of coaching tools that I use and I as I'm amber [inaudible] in the beginning they combine or as you. I don't know why I just use the third person. That was weird for me. I was like talking to your people and I know as you just said in the beginning, um, they combine kind of that feminist approach and the cognitive tools, right?

- Speaker 2: 34:39 Because one of the things I think a lot of feminist women struggle with is like, well, I know I shouldn't care if that dude texted me back, but I'm anxiously staring at my phone all day. Right? Like having a feminist or any social justice analysis doesn't actually change your feelings. In fact, often it creates more negative feelings. You feel angry and frustrated, right? And outrage. And so what I teach is both has that perspective, but then also teaches you how to manage those feelings and create the ones you want. And this is a whole other pockets we have. That's a big misconception that you have to be angry to change things. So anyways, so that's what the [inaudible] does and I teach concrete coaching tools and talk about this stuff. Um, and if you go to the website, there is a free guide you can download.
- Speaker 2: 35:22 Um, right now I think it's dealing with imposter syndrome. There'll be a new one up in a couple of weeks about how to create confidence. So either one, those are both good teacher useful things. Um, and yeah, that's where to find me. And then, um, in terms of the program, I do have some new things I'm cooking up. There's probably going to be a couple of different variations of it at like different levels of investment and time and I'm sort of depths available in the next few months. But anybody, if you sign up for the free guides, you'll be on my list and then you'll find out all about that when it happens. And in the unfuck your brain program, basically what we do is we learn how to rewire your brain so that you don't deal with. You don't deal with perfectionism. So you're able to accept yourself the way you are, which actually means you get way more accomplished and done, um, and uh, and um, people pleasing.
- Speaker 2: 36:10 We teach you how to care. I teach you how to care more about what you think and actually make choices that work for you and not feel guilt over, not do what other people want. And then with a validation can teach you how to create your own validation for yourself or how to create your own confidence in terms of imposter syndrome and teach you how to actually acknowledge and respect and feel empowered by your own experience and expertise and kind of feel like you belong wherever you want to be or wherever you are in your work life, your love life, your family and social life and your relationship with your body. Those are the four main topics right now.
- Speaker 1: 36:44 I don't know anybody that doesn't need coaching on a lot of that stuff. So, um, but you know, just to everybody that's listening, I've found Kara's podcast to be super helpful and informative and the episodes are not, you know, two hours long. They are short, digestible, like stuff you can use right

away. So definitely check that out and we'll link to everything in the posts that accompanies this episode. Um, and to all cars, a social media presences and all that good stuff too. So, um, what's one last final? A bit of advice, piece of wisdom, parting gift for everybody listening before we sign off.

- Speaker 2: 37:21 Am I got so much pressure? Your thoughts cause your feelings. Seriously you guys, I think, you know, you may be listening to being like girl analytically, I understand that, but experiencing it in your daily life is a different thing. So if you were going to practice one thing, whenever you're having a strong feeling, get out a pen and paper and write down what you're thinking at that moment and start to see the connection between the thoughts you're thinking and the feelings you're having. Cause basically humans are not that different from lab rats and we just want to feel better, feel more good things, feel less bad things. That's our whole motivation in life. So if you learn how to do that, you can do anything.
- Speaker 1: 37:55 Awesome. Thank you carl. Thanks for your time and thanks for being here today.
- Speaker 2: 38:00 Yeah, my pleasure. Thanks for having me.